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German Democratic Republic

STATUS REPORT ON THE RUBBER AND ASBESTOS INDUSTRY

There will apparently be a shortage of 350,000 tires to be used as replacements. Also, the quality is poor, because there is not enough natural rubber and what there is is of poorer and poorer quality as time goes on. It is planned to exchange 3,000 tons of GDR synthetic for 2,000 tons of natural rubber from the USSR in order to improve the situation.

The supply of bicycle tires for 1954, however, appears to be assured.

There will be an estimated shortage of 235,000 meters of V belts in 1954. The difficulty is rather the poor quality of raw materials than the shortage of capacity. About two thirds of the output of V belts is for export or government orders.

So far as water hoses are concerned, the German Trade Center can cover only one fifth of the reported requirements of 2 million meters for the first half of 1954. The production of fire hose is limited by the shortage of yarns, so that capacity cannot be fully utilized. Hoses for the foods industry cannot be produced in the desired quantity, because of the shortage of certain chemicals and of natural rubber.

Only half the 1954 requirements of rubber ~~yarn~~ yarn can be covered by domestic production. The remainder is supposed to be imported, but it is doubtful whether this is possible, as in 1953 only 40 percent of planned imports actually arrived.

There are no stocks on hand to meet the requirements for the second half of 1954 of 45,000 pairs of industrial rubber gloves and 2,000 pairs of electrician's gloves.

Only 12.5 tons of the 100 tons of Poro-Grepe (for shoe soles) to be imported during the first quarter of 1954 actually arrived.

A great many rubber articles have to be imported (a list is given) because there are no facilities for producing them in the GDR. It would be most desirable if production of these items could be developed in the GDR. Surgical articles also have to be imported, because the quality of domestic raw materials is not adequate for their manufacture. Unfortunately, the quality of such items obtained from East European countries is also not good.

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